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ABSTRACT

This action research project implemented and evaluated a curriculum designed to help students with varying degrees of emotional intelligence improve their social adeptness. The targeted population consisted of sixth-grade students in a large urban setting in central Illinois. The students' levels of social ineptness were determined and documented via data collected from various instruments: teacher observation checklists, behavior records, student questionnaires, and reflective journal writing. Analysis of probable causes data revealed that students lack interpersonal skills related to: communicating feelings effectively, empathizing with others, working cooperatively with others, and handling conflict with poise. A review of solution strategies combined with an analysis of the problem setting resulted in a 16-week intervention focusing on five components of emotional intelligence: cooperation, communication, expression of feelings, appreciation of diversity, and conflict resolution. Each topic was covered twice a week over 2 weeks, then revisited for 1 week each. The final week was devoted to conducting final assessments. Post-intervention data indicated an overall improvement in the number of students displaying exemplary interpersonal social skills in the classroom setting. Twenty-six appendices include a discipline record form, student questionnaire, teacher observation checklist, and instructional materials. (Contains 39 references.) (Author/HTH)

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ENHANCING STUDENTS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & SOCIAL ADEPTNESS

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

St. Xavier/SkyLight Professional Development

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ABSTRACT

This report describes a curriculum designed to help students with varying degrees of emotional intelligence improve their social adeptness. The targeted population consisted of sixth-grade students in a large urban setting, in central Illinois. The students' levels of social ineptness were determined and documented via data collected from various instruments: teacher observation checklists, behavior records, student questionnaires, and reflective journal writing.

Analysis of the probable causes data revealed that students lack interpersonal and interpersonal skills related to: communicating feelings effectively, empathizing with others, working cooperatively with others, and handling conflict with poise. The professional literature suggests that students require guidance and instruction in these domains just as they require guidance and instruction in the academic arena.

A careful review of solution strategies, suggested by reputable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of five major categories of intervention: cooperation, communication, expression of feelings, appreciation of diversity, and conflict resolution.

Postintervention data indicate an overall improvement in the number of students displaying exemplary interpersonal social skills in the classroom setting.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT i

CHAPTER 1 - PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT 1

General Statement of the Problem 1

Immediate Problem Context 1

The Surrounding Community 5

National Context of the Problem 6

CHAPTER 2 - PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION 9

Problem Evidence 9

Probable Cause 13

CHAPTER 3 - THE SOLUTION STRATEGY 18

Literature Review 18

Project Objectives and Processes 23

Project Action Plan 24

CHAPTER 4 - PROJECT RESULTS 27

Historical Description of the Intervention 27

Presentation and Analysis of Results 34

Conclusions and Recommendations....38

REFERENCES....39

APPENDIX A....42

APPENDIX B....43

APPENDIX C....44

APPENDIX D....45

APPENDIX E....46

APPENDIX F....47

APPENDIX G....48

APPENDIX H....49

APPENDIX I....50

APPENDIX J....51

APPENDIX K....53

APPENDIX L....54

APPENDIX M....55

APPENDIX N....56

APPENDIX O....57

APPENDIX P 58

APPENDIX Q 59

APPENDIX R 61

APPENDIX S 62

APPENDIX T 64

APPENDIX U 65

APPENDIX V 67

APPENDIX W 68

APPENDIX X 69

APPENDIX Y 70

APPENDIX Z 71

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

Some of the students at the targeted middle school exhibit behaviors considered socially unacceptable and academically counterproductive. The existence of the problem is evidenced by the classroom teacher's discipline record forms, observations of peer interactions, and discipline referrals to the school administrators.

School Site

The school, located in the west central area of this midwestern city, is the largest of twelve middle schools in its district. The two story brick facility was constructed in 1962 but has undergone three major renovations since that time. The first addition, added in 1972, was built to serve the hearing impaired students in both the city and the surrounding counties. In 1977, a second addition was added to provide additional classroom and library space. The third addition was added in 1991 for still additional classrooms. Today, the school has a total of 30 classrooms and covers just over 25 acres of land.

The school boasts a state-of-the-art computer lab with internet access on 20 of the available 30 computers. The two-story structure has a total of 36 computers available for student use. Outside of the computer lab, there are 2 computers on roll carts to serve the classrooms on

the second floor and 3 computers on roll carts to serve the classrooms on the first floor. The library has an additional computer, with internet access, which the students use to do research and to explore educational websites.

The school hosts such sports as basketball and volleyball in a large gymnasium with a full basketball court and wooden student bleachers. Opposite the wall with the student bleachers is an elevated stage with sound equipment. The stage separates two locker rooms: one for the male student body and another for the female student body.

On the second floor of the building, there are two laboratories to enrich the students' learning. The science laboratory is equipped with chemicals and supplies unsurpassed by some of the local high schools. The other laboratory, the video lab, features a 64 inch color television. The big screen televison is used to show educational videos and it has the capacity to enlarge and project images from the screen of the computer on the roll cart.

Behind the large air-conditioned student cafeteria is the portion of the building reserved for the students with special needs. These classes serve the needs of students enrolled in the early education program and the needs of the hearing impaired students. Whenever possible, students with disabilities are mainstreamed into the regular classroom setting and receive resource help from the special education personnel.

The school's staff includes: 1 principal, 1 assistant principal, 15 regular division teachers, 17 special education teachers, 3 speech pathologists, and 23 support personnel.

There are 420 students in the school. Of these students, 50.7% are classified as low income. Low income students are pupils from families receiving public aid, students living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, students being supported in foster homes with public funds, or students who are eligible to receive free or reduced-

price lunches. The racial/ethnic make-up of the school is 51.4% Black, 46.6% White, 1.4% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.6% Hispanic (State Report Card, 1998).

The school has many programs to encourage the academic and social development of the students. These programs include: Scholar's Cup, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), Hearing Education and Rehabilitation of Deaf Children (H.E.A.R.), MathCounts, Bank At School, various athletic programs, an afterschool remedial reading club, and an Adopt-a-School partnership with the community.

The Classroom

This sixth-grade science classroom is located on the north side of the building on the second floor. Because it is a corner room, it is more spacious than most of the classrooms on the same level. A large picture window gives view to an enormous field featuring a baseball diamond used to sponsor the home games of the city's oldest high school. Also visible from the classroom's window is the northern section of the school's parking lot, located just east of the baseball diamond. A portion of the large golf course, located right across the street from the school, complements the view. There are two large chalkboards and an overhead projection screen along the same wall.

Opposite the wall featuring the window is a reading center supplied with books and magazines of many different genres. This wall contains a large analog clock and is plastered with posters and banners donning motivational pictures and inspirational phrases.

The fall north wall, adjacent to the reading center, contains the multimedia center of the classroom. On this wall, there is a computer with a color printer and a collection of CD-ROMs, an overhead projector, and a 27 inch color television with a VCR and a laserdisc player. The

district supplies several laserdiscs to complement the science curriculum.

Directly across from the multimedia center is a wall that features another couple of chalkboards. These boards are seldom used for writing because one of them is covered with posters of people, past and present, who have made significant contributions to science. The other chalkboard is covered with posters that change semi-monthly, or as the themes change. Along this same wall is a rolling mini lab, used to demonstrate scientific principles which don't require the use of the fully-equipped science lab.

The District

The city's school district is governed by a seven member elected school board. In the administrative staff, there is a superintendent, an assistant superintendent of school operations, an assistant superintendent of pupil services, an assistant superintendent of special services, and a comptroller-treasurer.

The district operates 14 primary schools, 14 middle schools and 4 high schools. The district offers special education programs for students with limited abilities, adult education programs and vocational education. The district has a diagnostic learning center to help identify students' problem areas and assign the correct curriculum for individual development.

There are 1042 teachers in the district with an average of 15.3 years of experience. Fifty point five percent hold at least a master's degree. The racial/ethnic background of teachers is: 92.3% White, 7% Black, 0.4% Hispanic, and 0.4% Asian. The gender of the district's teachers is: 75.4% female and 24.6% male. The average teaching salary for the district is $38, 725.00 (School Report Card, 1998).

The Surrounding Community

The targeted middle school is located in a mid-western city with a population of 111, 400. Having been settled since 1680, it is the oldest community in the state. The city is governed by a mayor, a city manager, and a council of ten members. The city takes pride in its riverfront development and in its technological advances. In 1997, the city opened the Gateway Building on its riverfront to serve as a gathering spot for meetings and receptions. Before the year 2000, the city will complete construction of a cutting edge technology center. This center will provide computer education, training and career networking, and technology acess for all citizens. (Economic Development Council for the Peoria Area, 1998).

The city offers all the conveniences of a metropolis without sacrificing the security of a smaller town. There are several community and theatre groups and recreation centers that enrich the cultural element of the city. Its state of the art museum (the largest accredited museum within a 75 mile radius) is frequently a stopping point for nationally acclaimed exhibits (Logan Images, 1999). The city's growing stature as a medical community, its myriad social and educational resources, and its attractive business climate have all contributed to its recognition as an All America city in 1953, 1966, and 1989 (City Annual,1999).

The city's prime location in the heart of the state has made it an attractive site for various types of manufacturers. Agricultural products, information technologies, large trucking equipment, and other types of industrial machinery are but a few of the goods produced in the city. Manufacturing constitutes 23% of the city's workforce. Major employers in the non-manufacturing industries include marketing, medical and educational services, and advertising. (Economic Development Council for the Peoria Area,

1998).

The neighborhood surrounding the school reflects the city's diversity. Of the city's population of 111, 400: 75,400 are White; 27,700 are Black; 4,800 are Hispanic; and 3,500 are Asian / Pacific Islanders. The city's median family income is $46,000 and the average single family home sells for $79,300 (Economic Development Council for the Peoria Area, 1998).

The average home in the school's neighborhood sells for $67, 500 (Kallister Realty, 1998). Some of the school's population live in a nearby housing project while other students are brought to school on a bus from more remote areas. The local neighborhood has two shopping plazas located right across the street from one another. Included in those plazas are a bank, a grocery store, a pharmacy, a large discount store, and several restaurants.

There are two large churches located just north of the school. Nearby one of the churches is an apartment complex whose residents are not in the school's jurisdiction. Directly across the street from the school is one of the city's most popular golf courses.

National Context of Problem

Conventional wisdom tells us that a child's chances for a successful life are directly proportional to his or her I.Q. No wonder America's curriculum and instructional strategies place emphasis on the cognitive aspects of learning (Beiber, 1996). A new wave of research, however, indicates that I.Q. actually only accounts for about 20% of the factors that determines a person's success in life. The other 80% consists of factors that comprise a person's E.Q., or emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996).

The phrase "emotional intelligence" was coined in 1990 by Yale psychologist Peter Salovey and John Mayer, from the University of New Hampshire, to describe such qualities as self-awareness, empathy, and the regulation of emotion in a way that

enhances living (Gibbs, 1995). Daniel Goleman , a Harvard psychology Ph.D. and a science writer for the New York Times, expanded the definition of emotional intelligence to include motivation and social skills in addition to self-awareness, empathy, and proper handling of emotions (Pool, 1997). Goleman suggests that educators need to incorporate these five dimensions of emotional intelligence into all aspects of children's education (Pool, 1997).

According to Goleman, self-awareness is of utmost importance because it allows people to exercise some self-control (Gibbs, 1995). Very impulsive boys, who are troublesome in second grade, are six to eight times more likely to commit crimes and act violently in their teen years (O'Neil, 1996). "An emotionally intelligent person allows his or her mind to determine the appropriate response, at the appropriate time, toward the appropriate persons" (Stufft, 1996, p.43). Another component of self-awareness is being smart about what we feel. Adolescent girls with eating disorders are largely represented by those who confused feelings of anxiety, anger, boredom and hunger as sixth graders (O'Neil,1996).

The ability to move towards a goal is defined as one's motivation. In order to be productive and effective, students cannot yield to extenuating factors that may deter progression towards obtaining their goals. Common emotional factors that discourage students in pursuit of personal or academic goals are anxiety, anger, and depression. Major studies comprising more than 36,000 subjects indicate that worrying has an adverse effect on a student's academic performance (Goleman, 1996).

Another component of emotional intelligence, empathy, involves the ability to read emotional cues. This is especially important since researchers believe that 90% of emotional communication is nonverbal. Robert Rosenthal, a Harvard psychologist

developed a test to measure a student's capacity to empathize. He found that children who scored well were more popular and successful in school, even when their I.Q.s were average (Gibbs, 1995).

Interpersonal effectiveness, the power to influence, and popularity amongst peers all depend on a student' s social competence. A socially incompetent child struggles with decoding signals from others, which causes confusion, and ultimately distracts the child from learning. According to one study, children who are rejected by their peers are six to eight times more likely to drop out of school (Goleman, 1996).

The ability to handle upsetting feelings, or impulses, is another important factor of emotional intelligence. Consider the famous Marshmallow Test conducted at Stanford University. An experimenter used four-year-old kids from the Stanford University preschool as his subjects. He took the children one at a time into a room with a hidden camera. After talking with the children for a while, he placed a marshmallow on the table in front of them and pretended that he had to run an errand. He told the children that whoever could resist eating the marshmallow until he returned, would receive two marshmallows. Two-thirds of the children failed to wait out the ten minutes it took the experimenter to return. Only one-third of the children were able to delay gratification and thus receive two marshmallows. Fourteen years later, after high school graduation, the students were contacted. The students who were able to delay gratification were found to be popular and well-balanced emotionally; whereas, the impulsive subjects were not very popular and shown to anger more quickly. Furthermore, the less-impulsive students scored 210 points higher on the SATs than the more impulsive students did (Pool, 1997).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

The researcher used student questionnaires, teacher observation checklists, and student self-assessment forms to ascertain the degree of social incompetence within the targeted group of students.

The targeted group of 18 students were selected from a class with an original count of 20 pupils. One of the students was transferred to an afternoon alternative school before the commencement of the intervention. Of the remaining 19 students, one student did not return a signed permission slip in order to participate in the study; her father chose not to have her participate. The 18 students remain together as a cohort group as they move from class to class on a rotating departmentalized schedule. The researcher has this particular group for two class periods a day: during sixth-hour for science and during seventh-hour for an enrichment period. Enrichment periods are generally used to allow students to complete homework or they may engage in activities and discussions designed to promote their well-being. The researcher has another group of sixth-graders for an enrichment period during fifth-hour. After observing the increasing number of discipline referrals that the students in the seventh-hour class received, the researcher decided that this particular group of youths would benefit most from an intervention plan that addresses the students' social adeptness.

The targeted group of students exhibited poor interpersonal relations with one another as well as with adults. Instructional time was regularly disrupted by quarrels and exchanges of rude comments. Moreover, some of the students showed disrespect towards authoritative figures when corrective measures were taken.

The researcher believes that the growing number of disruptions occurring during this particular class period were due, in part, to the students' social incompetence. By the first full month of school, October, this group was already averaging more than one disciplinary referral per day (class period). The following table, derived from data on a discipline record form (Appendix A), shows the type of behaviors leading up to those disciplinary referrals.

Table 1.

Categories and Numbers of Discipline Referrals

October 1, 1999 Through October 29, 1999

Behavior Category	Number of Incidents	Number of Students
Insubordination	10	4
Arguing	9	6
Teasing	13	6
Disrespectful	4	4

This table shows that 36% of the observed misbehaviors fall into the teasing category. Teasing, along with verbal fighting, involved the most number of students. The type of teasing observed ranged from putting other students down, to making fun of one anothers' misfortunes or differences (not shown in table). Both of the aforementioned clearly indicate a deficit in empathy, a major indicator of one's level of emotional intelligence.

In an effort to better ascertain the students' levels of emotional intelligence, the researcher developed three instruments: a student self-assessment form (Appendix B), a student survey (Appendix C), and a teacher observation checklist (Appendix D). The self-assessments and the student surveys were administered to the targeted group of 18 students during the month

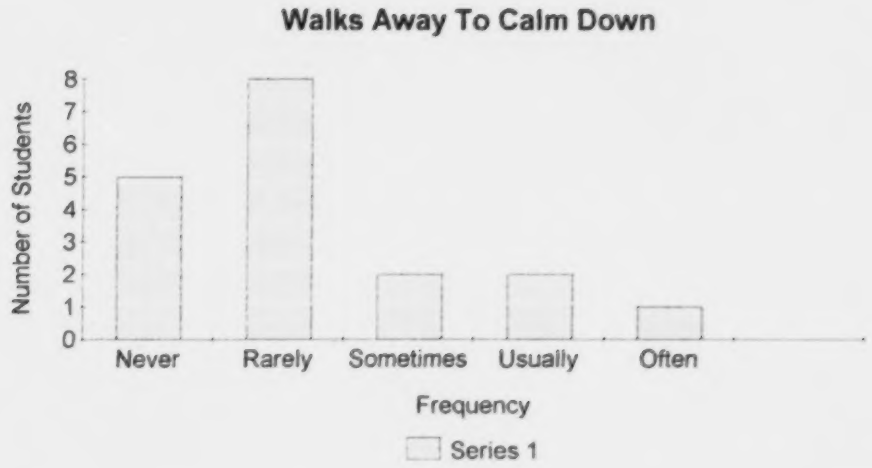
of November. The researcher used all three batteries to collect baseline data on the students. Select observations from the teacher observation checklist and select responses from the student inventories are depicted in figures 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

N = 18

Figure 1. The number of students communicating feelings rather than acting them out, October 1, 1999 through October 29, 1999.

Sixty-one percent of the students rarely or never communicate their feelings verbally. The researcher notes that, more times than not, a majority of the students respond inappropriately when something or someone bothers them. Because students have not become proficient at controlling their anger, pouting, slamming objects, and hitting (not indicated by the figure) seem to be a popular way of expressing the idea that the student is annoyed with someone or something.

The previous figure contains information collected during the month of October from the teacher observation checklists (Appendix D). The following figure contains information from a student questionnaire (Appendix B) administered in the month of November, 1999.



N = 18

Figure 2 The frequency that students claim to walk away from a situation to avoid an argument, November 1999.

The high number of students, 72%, claiming to rarely or never walk away from a situation to avoid an argument indicates a need for some type of intervention on the topic of conflict resolution. Too many times students opt to vent their anger immediately, and apparently lose sight of the fact that verbal fighting often preludes physical fighting.

Being able to walk away from a situation in order to prevent an altercation requires a student to have a level of confidence strong enough so as not to be affected when other students interject comments about the individual's perceived weakness for "running away from someone".

The researcher notes that responses from another student questionnaire (Appendix C), offer some indication of the individual student's level of confidence. The students were asked the question, "Are you a good group partner?". More than one of every three students did not perceive themselves as good partners. One's self-perception is a clear indicator of the individual's level of self confidence. Moreover, students hold the opinions of peers in very high

esteem. When students believe that others have a favorable opinion of them, that belief is internalized and demonstrated by high levels of self-confidence.

Figure 3 below depicts the baseline data the researcher gathered on self-confidence. The same data provided the researcher with an insight to the students' attitudes about group work.

N = 18

Figure 3. The number of students who consider themselves to be good partners when working with other students, November 1999.

Probable Cause

The literature suggests that a major culprit for the declining levels of social competence amongst middle school students is the failure of adults to teach and model viable social skills Mayer, 1996).

Experts suggest that social adeptness does not automatically improve with age but requires that young adults receive constant feedback about age-appropriate behaviors into adolescence and beyond (Stiehl, 1993). Fewer adults are investing their time into teaching social skills to children. This isn't necessarily intentional. In an effort to meet the demands of

economic pressures, parents are working more and spending less time with their children. This curtails the time parents have to model positive values, communicate expected behaviors, and to encourage social skills (Bellanca, 1992).

In an interview with John O'Neil, Daniel Goleman states that the reduced discretionary time that parents spend with children is having adverse effects on the students' social skills and emotional well-being. Children are spending less time interacting with other people and are spending more time with television and computers (O'Neil 1996).

While the television and the computer are great assets for children, they don't do much to enhance the social competence of today's youth; especially when the children are left to view them unsupervised. Lickona (1991) stated:

> The typical elementary school child spends 30 hours a week in front of the television set. By the age 16, the average child will have witnessed an estimated 200,000 acts of violence; and by the age 18, approximately 40,000 sexually titillating scenes. Episodes of sexualized violence are increasingly common. (Lickona, 1991, p.5)

According to Schaps (1997), schools have to take a stronger role in fostering the ethical and social development of children because of the decline in effectiveness of American families and communities to prepare them to be adults in a just and democratic society. Some experts agree; however, this opinion does not go unchallenged. When schools take on the responsibility of teaching core values to children, some parents become resentful and suspicious of the intent. Parents fear that the teachers are taking on the role of therapists and that the schools are promoting social agendas at the expense of instructional time (Berreth and Berman, 1997). Some parents also fear that children may say something in a group that other children are not ready to

hear. Furthermore, children do not understand issues of confidentiality and may spread personal family issues (Vondra, 1996).

One of the problems that schools face is developing the methods to meet the educational needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. The inequality that results from differences in educational achievement of children is likely to have an adverse effect on the social stability of the United States. If the disparity in educational achievement continues, millions of African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Latin Americans will not obtain the education necessary for full participation in the economics and civic life of the country (Bowman, 1995). Experts suggests that social/emotional learning programs that address bias and discrimination are always risky. However, the ramifications for ignoring these sensitive issues are far greater than the risks that come along with addressing these issues (Weissglass, 1997).

As of 1994, more than 26% of all children living in cities of 100,000 people or more are growing up in low-income families, with all the associated health, nutrition and social problems. The Center for the Study of Social Policy verified that:

> the disadvantages experienced by children who live in low-income communities and who are racial and ethnic minorities remain severe and far more common than the risks and hardships experienced by American children as a whole (Sautter, 1994, p.8).

The shortcomings of teachers implementing social/emotional learning programs may also contribute to the problem of poor social adeptness. In an article entitled Celebrating Diversity, the teacher admits that her own prejudices kept her from establishing rapport with her students; a rapport that is so crucial when trying to execute a program to benefit the students emotional well-being. The teacher, admittedly wrongfully, thought that her job was to change her students

into someone more reflective of her own culture (Pigford, 1996). America is better off as a society when educators bring out the best in each student and draws from the talents that develop as a result (Burron, 1995).

Despite the disadvantages that some groups face, emotional intelligence is practically all learned and therefore attainable by all (Pasi, 1997). Most experts believe that the disadvantage that comes along with being young is probably more pertinent to social ineptness than many other factors. Growing evidence reveals that older people are able to regulate their emotional states better than younger people (Bower, 1999).

As research continues to discover the intricate functions of the brain, new information about the way children learn continues to surface. In the last decade, research has confirmed what many teachers have long known. Because of the relationship between emotions and learning, the emotional atmosphere will have a direct impact on the learning that occurs. Students learn best in a nonthreatening and supportive atmosphere. Stressful situations can chemically trigger an intense focus on unimportant things. Knowing that pressures can have a negative impact on a student's ability to learn, educators must work to replace a student's fear of failure with a student's anticipation of success (Bieber and Jakicic, 1996).

At least 3 of the 12 mind/brain learning principles developed by Geoffrey and Renata Caine supports the aforementioned. The second principle states that the brain is a social brain; therefore social relationships profoundly affect learning. The fifth principle states that the emotional climate is essential to education because emotions are critical to patterning. Emotions and thoughts shape each other and therefore are inextricable. Finally, the eleventh principle says that complex learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat (Caine and Caine, 1997).

Neuroscientists have found that emotions derive from an area of the brain called the limbic system - more specifically, the amygdala. The ability to plan, learn, and remember derives from an area of the brain called the neocortex. The more connections that exist between

the limbic system (amygdala) and the neocortex, the more emotional responses are possible (Gibbs, 1995). Because the amygdala doesn't mature until a child is 15 or 16, ample time exists for molding them into socially responsible people (Pool, 1997).

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Conventional wisdom tells us that IQ is the best predictor of a child's success in life. According to Daniel Goleman (1996), research indicates that, at most, IQ contributes about 20 % to the factors that determine success - leaving 80 % to other forces. These other forces make up what is called emotional intelligence, or EQ. Emotional intelligence consists of affective abilities such as getting along with others (cooperating, resolving conflict), self-motivation, persistence, empathizing (expressing feelings, appreciating diversity), controlling impulses and regulating one's mood. The goal of this project is to improve the students' chances for success by enhancing their emotional intelligence and social adeptness.

Schools have always performed an important socializing function in our society. Given the popular perception that students receive less guidance from their homes, churches, and communities than they did in the past, schools today must be committed more deeply than ever before to intentionally creating community, and to paying attention to students' social and emotional lives (Lantieri & Patti, 1996).

While many educators recognize the apparent decline of social adeptness amongst American school children, they along with some parents and administrators fear that

devoting valuable class time to addressing the "bumps and bruises" that go along with growing up, decreases the amount of time spent on traditional academics and will inevitably have an adverse effect on test scores (Elias & Butler, 1997).

Proponents of SEL (social/emotional learning) programs report that social and emotional learning is strongly related to several standards of *Goals 2000* and provides the kinds of skills that national reports show students need to avoid disaffection, dropping out, and other self-destructive behaviors (Elias & Butler, 1997). A SEL program conducted in public elementary schools serving high-crime areas in Seattle, Washington reported better academic achievement, less school misbehavior and after implementation (Hawkins, 1999). Results like the aforementioned have compelled many private and public schools across the country and beyond to incorporate SEL programs, and variations of it, into their curriculum.

The world's largest school, a private school in Lucknow India serving 19,000 students, has provided an exemplary education for students in kindergarten through twelfth-grade by focusing on both academic excellence and the students' emotional well-being. City Montessori School (CMS) integrates four concepts to form the basis of their approach: universal values (kindness, empathy, cooperation), excellence, global understanding, and service.

Teachers emphasize cooperation, consultation, and participation in all student activities. To foster academic excellence, teachers help students focus on group goals and cooperation rather than competition. Apparently it pays off; students at CMS have won unmatched numbers of statewide merit scholarships based on academic excellence.

Students also have outscored all other Indian schools on national and state-level high school board exams. In addition, 99% of students maintain an average grade of A and all graduate from high school, as compared to 30% in the state overall. CMS attributes its achievements to its emphasis on values that include excellence as a lifelong attitude (Cotton, 1996).

A little closer to home, educators in New York City's Public School System found that their version of the SEL program, called Resolving Conflict Creatively, had a positive effect on students' emotional well-being as well. Specifically, teachers and administrators reported less violence in the classroom; spontaneous use of conflict resolution skills by students; and increases in self-esteem, empowerment, awareness of and verbalization of feelings, caring behavior and acceptance of differences (Lantieri & Patti, 1996).

Despite the affective benefits of initiating programs designed to enhance the emotional intelligence and social adeptness of students, many educators have resisted teaching values for fear the schools' constituencies will be unable to agree on which values to teach. In addition, some have failed to acknowledge the overwhelming evidence that the academic work of the children benefits directly from the time spent on social and emotional learning (Elias & Butler, 1997).

Teaching social and emotional skills can have a long term positive effect on academic achievement (Elias and Butler 1997). In 1993, over one thousand first- and second-grade students from ten elementary schools participated in a project conducted by the Social Development Research Group of the University of Washington. The project, called Raising

Healthy Children, uses an integrated, broad-based approach to teaching social and emotional skills. Preliminary analysis of the data collected from the teachers in the project over a two-year period showed a marked difference in age-appropriate behaviors, school commitment, and antisocial behaviors school commitment, and antisocial behaviors, between the students who did and those who did not participate in the study. Earlier research showed positive effects in the strategies of Raising Healthy Children - one of them being increased scores on standardized achievement tests (Cummings, 1997).

Educators agree that in order to build smart students, effective schools have to nurture the spirit as well as the intellect. The highest achievers not only perform well academically, but they also know how to be social, caring, and responsible human beings (Bodine, 1999).

Gottfredson recommends that schools seeking to reduce delinquent behaviors amongst low-achieving students, develop an approach that works to both increase academic success and the students' social involvement and attachment to school (Gaustadt, 1992).

As many as 700 school districts across the country have instituted social/emotional learning programs (Ratnesar, 1997). One such district is the public school system in New Haven, Connecticut. From 1987-1997, administrators have continued to develop the New Haven Social Development Project. The superintendent and the board of education established the district-wide project after a task force reported that a large percentage of New Haven's high school students engaged in behaviors that jeopardized their academic performance, health, and safety. Some of the risky behaviors included drinking, smoking marijuana, and engaging in unprotected sex. Reports after ten years of intervention have shown remarkable declines in those same behaviors. Administrators report that the program has enhanced the students' academic performance, social competence, and health (Weissberg, 1997).

According to Daniel Goleman (1995), the window of opportunity that schools have to develop the "neural architecture" that will help students handle emotional impulses is relatively

long. Some schools are seizing the opportunity earlier than others. At Jackie Robinson Middle School, also in Connecticut, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade teachers use a district-wide curriculum to teach problem-solving skills to negotiate peer relationships, and to instill basic social values. New Haven also has a comprehensive social development program that teaches specific behavioral skills at each grade level (Harrington, 1997).

In Seattle, Washington, public elementary schools serving high-crime areas participated in an intervention program that combined teacher training, parent education, and social competence training for students in grades one through six. The intervention was designed to address: self reported violent and nonviolent crimes, substance abuse, sexual activity, pregnancy, bonding to school, school achievement, grade repetition and school dropout, suspension and/or expulsion, and school misbehavior. The results of the intervention were consistent with the theoretical models which guide intervention and support efforts to reduce health-risk behaviors and violence in schools serving high-crime neighborhoods. Furthermore, by the age of 18, the students involved in the study reported more commitment and school attachment, better academic achievement, and less school misbehaviors than the control group (Hawkins, 1999).

Typical high-crime areas are not the only benefactors of social/emotional learning programs. A junior high school in a rural area of Alberta Canada was restored after implementing such a program. The assistant principal talks about the paradigm shift that the school had to undergo in order to reclaim the building which had been taken over with violence. The need to keep in pace with new curriculum and new demands undermined the time available for teaching social skills. Today, the school serves as a model for schools looking to become "moral communities". In the article, the principal cites numerous studies where teaching values, fostering acceptance, and building relationships are essential elements in building effective schools (Del Litke, 1996).

The benefits of social and emotional learning also transfers into the workplace after the school years. According to Kelly (1998), social and emotional intelligence will ultimately be

proven to be the core requirements for success in certain occupations. In his recently published book, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman says that companies frivolously spend an enormous amount of money every year on ineffective worker education and training programs (Goleman, 1998). Research from more than 500 companies revealed that the success of the business people was far more dependent upon emotional competencies when compared to the IQ and job specific skills (Bates, 1999).

Acceptable levels of emotional intelligence change with an individual's age, life stage, and experience. Because of this, schools should structure all learning in a developmental context. Young people should be taught decision-making and perspective-taking skills. In addition, because young people are easily seduced by a material culture that promotes instant gratification, they should be taught how to delay gratification and to persist through obstacles. Parents and schools should work together to develop a consistent set of values that the students can translate into action. Furthermore, the home and school environment should reinforce responsible behavior and provide the children with opportunities to successfully test the skills of social deftness (Berreth and Berman, 1997).

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of teaching specific social skills, during the period of November 1999 to February 2000, the targeted students in the sixth-grade class will increase their levels of emotional intelligence and social adeptness, as measured by teacher observation checklists, student self-assessments, and journal writings.

The following processes are necessary in order to accomplish the project objective:

1. Researcher will identify and model social skills conducive to enhancing levels

of emotional intelligence.

2. Researcher will identify curriculum and supplementary materials to provide opportunities to practice the use of the social skills individually.

3. Researcher will identify cooperative learning activities that address the targeted social skills.

Project Action Plan

Throughout the study, an attempt to improve the emotional intelligence quotient and the social skills of the subjects will be made by focusing on five components of emotional intelligence including (but not limited to): cooperation, communication, expressing feelings, appreciating diversity, and conflict resolution. There will be a minimum of two contact times per week, during the subjects' enrichment periods, with each topic covering a two week timespan. During the last six weeks, each of the five components will be revisited with a timespan of one week each. The last week will be devoted to conducting final assessments.

The first theme, cooperation, will be supplemented with activities designed to help the subjects acquire the skills and understandings they need to solve the common problems that come up as they work and play together.

Recognizing that all conflicts are rooted in some kind of communication problem, the second theme, communication, will be supplemented with activities designed to help the subjects acquire observation, listening, and other communication skills to reduce conflict and handle it effectively.

The third theme, expressing feelings, will be supplemented with activities

designed to help the subjects identify their feelings and express them in ways that are constructive, rather than destructive and hurtful.

The subjects will explore racial and ethnic differences under the fourth theme, appreciating diversity. The activities are designed to help the subjects appreciate and value individual differences.

The final theme, conflict resolution, will be supplemented with activities designed to help the subjects learn the skills they need to handle conflict productively.

I. Cooperation

A. Cooperative skill building (introduction) (Appendix E)

B. Getting acquainted and team building (reinforcement) (Appendix F)

C. Cooperative games (reinforcement) (Appendix G)

D. Cooperative challenges and group problem solving (reinforcement) (Appendix H)

E. Journal writing (assessment)

II. Communication

A. Communication skill building (introduction) (Appendix I)

B. Observation, memory, and point of view (reinforcement) (Appendix J)

C. Exploring communication (reinforcement) (Appendix K)

D. Listening and speaking activities (reinforcement) (Appendix L)

E. Journal writing (assessment)

III. Expressing feelings

A. Emotional skill building (introduction) (Appendix M)

B. Group trust and emotional safety (reinforcement) (Appendix N)

C. Expanding feeling vocabularies (reinforcement) (Appendix O)

D. Expressing and managing anger (reinforcement) (Appendix P)

E. Journal writing (assessment)

IV. Appreciating diversity

A. Appreciating diversity: skill building (introduction) (Appendix Q)

B. Looking at our differences and similarities (reinforcement) (Appendix R)

C. Exploring other cultures (reinforcement) (Appendix S)

D. Understanding stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination (reinforcement) (Appendix T)

E. Journal writing (assessment)

V. Conflict resolution

A. Conflict resolution skill building (introduction) (Appendix U)

B. Exploring conflict and conflict resolution (reinforcement) (Appendix V)

C. Practicing conflict resolution (reinforcement) (Appendix W)

D. Peer mediation training (reinforcement) (Appendix X)

E. Journal writing (assessment)

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Perspective of the Intervention

The objective of the research project was to reduce the occurrences of inappropriate student behaviors in the classroom. A conflict resolution curriculum and activities promoting cooperative learning skills were implemented to enhance the students' levels of emotional intelligence and social adeptness; thereby decreasing the frequency of inappropriate behaviors. Before implementing the activities, which began in the third week of November, the researcher was already collecting data on the students' behaviors (Appendix D) indicative of their social deftness, or lack thereof.

The intervention plan was designed to allow the researcher to have a time frame of two weeks to employ activities specific to each of the following five themes: cooperation, communication, expressing feelings, appreciating diversity, and conflict resolution. The researcher used two 45-minute enrichment periods per week, usually Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, to actively engage the students in activities taken from the *Adventures in Peacemaking Conflict Resolution Guide* (Appendices E - Z). This allowed the researcher to cover four activities during each two-week time-frame.

The first two weeks of intervention were devoted to building the students' cooperative skills: namely, team building (Appendix E), participating in cooperative games (Appendix G), and developing techniques in group problem solving (Appendix H). The first activity was called, Toothpicks. The students began this activity by first creating a list of ways that groups can make decisions. Some of their responses included voting, flipping coins, drawing straws, and playing the ever-so-famous rocks, papers, scissors game. This gave the students a sense of ownership

over the rules that they would have to abide by later while working in groups. As a group, they were given a box of toothpicks and a large piece of white poster paper. They were told to create anything they wanted to as long as they could mutually agree upon the final product. Most of the nine groups of two did fine working cooperatively. One group decided to divide the toothpicks up and allow each individual to make their own creations. Following the activity, we discussed the problems that groups were faced with and many of them admitted that they had a difficult time following their own preestablished rules. Each person thought his or her idea was the best.

Another activity under the cooperation umbrella was called Impulse. Here the researcher and the students gathered in a circle and held hands. The researcher discreetly sent an impulse to the next individual whose job it was to send it on around to the next person and so on. The objective was for the impulse to return to the researcher uninterrupted. That continued without success and the group finally decided to send a verbal message instead. The students couldn't seem to master that fashion either, although the verbal messages returned a little more recognizable than did the hand impulses. During the follow-up discussion, the students discussed the importance of working together to accomplish a group goal.

Thanksgiving break interrupted the second week of the cooperation theme. There were only 2 scheduled days of school during the week of Thanksgiving, so the researcher did not attempt to incorporate any activities that week. After returning from Thanksgiving break, the students seemed anxious to do more activities. There were two more activities planned under the current theme. It was obvious that the students were already learning some valuable lessons - but interpreted it as fun.

The Frozen Bean Bag activity (Appendix G) was next. The students first created bean bags made of two glued paper plates with popcorn seeds inside. Everyone placed their bean bags (created the day before) onto their heads. The team goal was to get from point A to point B without allowing the bean bag to fall. If the bean bag fell, the student was frozen until a classmate on the same team could come and replace the bean bag to the individual's head

without allowing one's own bean bag to fall. This activity created a lot of laughter, energy, and unfortunately, a lot of cheating. During the follow-up discussion we talked about the importance of maintaining integrity when group activities call for competition. The students discussed how they looked forward to helping others because people helped them when they were frozen.

The final activity under the cooperation theme was not nearly as energetic but it was just as challenging. This activity was called Can't We Count to Ten? (Appendix H) The students were told that they were going to have a CAT test, a cooperation achievement test. The students were told that to pass the test, they need to simply count to ten as a group. The stipulation was that everyone had to close their eyes and no two people could speak at the same time. If more than one person said the next number, we would have to start all over. They thought that this would be easy. The challenge became quite clear after the group failed to get pass the number 5, after several attempts. The students clearly hadn't established a way to communicate to each other that someone else planned to speak. The researcher was asked to take a phone call in the office. Upon returning, the students were not only able to count to ten, but all the way up to eighteen. They had assigned each individual a number once they got an opportunity to do so.

The activities during the first two weeks of intervention took more time than the researcher anticipated. Many of the activities during the first two weeks were designed to be implemented in twenty minutes or less; however, gathering materials, and reserving time for verbal and written reflections required at least another twenty minutes per activity. The researcher feels that the activities under the cooperation theme were successful at fostering a feeling of community within the classroom setting and helping the children acquire the skills they need to solve common problems that arise while interacting with one another socially and while working with one another in cooperative groups. These were the activities that provided the foundation for the activities to follow.

During weeks three and four, the students were engaged in activities focusing on the theme of communication. These activities were designed to help the children acquire observation, listening, and other communication skills to handle conflict effectively whenever it arises. The activities that the researcher chose specifically addressed the following skills: observing accurately, speaking clearly, listening reflectively, and responding appropriately (Appendices I, J, K, and L). One of the activities that encompassed all of those skills was called, Pete and Repeat (Appendix I). In this activity, the researcher began by discussing with the students what paraphrasing meant. The students were then put into groups of two and were asked to recognize one person as Pete and the other person as Repeat. Pete was given a topic, provided by the researcher, and asked to discuss it. Repeat had the job of listening to what Pete said, and then paraphrasing it to Pete's satisfaction. After a few minutes, the students were asked to switch roles and follow the same rules as before. During the discussion following the activity, one student complained that his partner expected him to read her mind. That very comment gave lead to the discussion on the importance of accurately conveying messages. The students were asked to give a written response to a situation in which they felt that they had been misunderstood. By the time this theme was finished, the students had explored the importance of nonverbal communication (Appendix J), and participated in conflict resolution role-playing (Appendix L). They learned the importance of avoiding blaming others during times of conflict.

The following two-weeks were devoted to the third theme, expressing feelings. The objective of this theme was to help the children understand and discuss their feelings as they relate to conflict and other situations. Since children in conflict are more likely to act based on their feelings rather than on reason, the researcher selected activities designed to help the children identify their feelings and express them in ways that are constructive, rather than destructive and hurtful (Appendices M, N, O, and P). The researcher found that many of the activities under this umbrella required some sort of modifications. The Ballooning and Draining activity, (Appendix M) didn't work for the students. They were asked to pretend that they were

balloons and fill themselves with air taking deep slow breaths. The idea was to slowly "deflate" and release the tension and anger to help cool off. The researcher feels that this activity was probably ineffective because the students didn't seem to have any frustrations to vent at the time. The students were advised that this was a technique to use when they felt tension building up. The next activity called I Trust You, But..., (Appendix N), would have worked better in a wide open space. The weather did not permit taking the students outside as we were now in the second week of January. Unfortunately, afternoon gym classes were using the gym and there were no other options available. The students were asked to try the activity in the classroom. The activity required blindfolded students to attempt to walk from one place to another with the assistance of a spotter who, of course, was not blindfolded. The chaos and noise created in the classroom called for a very abbreviated activity.

The aforementioned theme, expressing feelings, did not seem to go well at all. The researcher believes that several factors contributed to the seemingly unsuccessful two weeks. First of all, these were the first two weeks after the long winter break. The researcher felt as though some of the ground gained prior to the break was lost. The students probably needed some time to reacclimatize before starting back into the activities, but time was definitely of the essence. Another possible factor was the fact that grade reports were coming out soon and some of the students began to complain about the loss of study time during their enrichment period. The researcher decided that any further assessments would come from oral discussions and not from students' written responses. Needless to say, these factors created an unwelcome shift in many of the students attitudes. Students seemed to digress at this point, and the researcher noticed a resurgence in the bickering and undesirable behaviors.

Originally, the researcher was planning to explore "appreciating diversity" as the fourth theme; however, the need to address the skills of conflict resolution was evident and it became the fourth, rather than the last, theme to be addressed. During these two-weeks, the students were engaged in activities that were designed to help them resolve conflict independently. Students

explored various ways to resolve conflicts and participated in role-playing activities which simulated common conflicts that arise in the classroom and beyond (Appendix U, V, W, and X). Under this umbrella, students also explored techniques which they can use to help resolve conflicts between peers (Appendices Y and Z).

The students began the activities of this theme by first identifying words that relate to conflict. They created a web that showed all the words that they thought related to conflict (Appendix U). The researcher asked the students to identify pictures in magazines that they thought were related to conflict. During discussion, most students expressed the belief that conflict involved more than just physical fighting. An interesting picture that one of the students showed was one of a puppy sitting on a staircase outside in the rain. When asked how it related to conflict, the student responded that if the dog belonged to him, he would be very upset with the person responsible for leaving the dog outside in the rain. That rejuvenated the researcher because it came from one of the students who didn't seem to show much empathy about the way others felt before.

During subsequent activities while studying conflict resolution, the students learned the ABC's of mediation (Appendix Y). Here the students learned three steps to take in order to help others who are involved in conflict. After establishing that their help is wanted, the students intervene by 1) asking questions while withholding judgments, 2) brainstorming possible solutions to the conflict, and 3) choosing viable solutions to the problem. The researcher pulled in an extra resource while dealing with conflict resolution. The students had two extra class periods on this topic because a colleague had some videos that dealt with the topic. The students enjoyed the activities and the videos and ,at least in theory, had a good understanding of how to avoid conflict, how to resolve conflict, and how to recognize potential conflicts.

During weeks nine and ten, students were involved in activities designed to help them see all types of differences as positive and valuable as they explored the final theme, appreciating diversity. The activities allowed the students to discuss differences and similarities in chosen

groups and helped them to realize the advantages of diversity by identifying things they can learn from people who are different from them in some way (Appendices Q, R, S, and T).

The researcher found that a very safe way to explore differences in groups is to allow the students to identify the group to which they belong using their own labels. When exploring differences, it is only necessary to place the word "not" in front of the labels that the students gave themselves. For example, when one student wanted to compare himself to others, he said that he belonged to a group with only one parent. The others did not become the group with two parents, they simply became the group of "not" with only one parent. The researcher believes that the nonjudgmental atmosphere contributed to the students willingness to express how they felt about being different from others. In one activity (Appendix R), the students created a map of their lives and shared the maps with a classmate who was different from them in some way. The students' goal was to discuss all the differences and then find as many commonalties as they could.

Due to an unexpected change in schedule, the researcher implemented the intervention later than originally planned. Because of this, the researcher was not afforded the opportunity to revisit each of the five themes for one week each (following the ten week intervention) as originally planned. Instead, the remaining time was devoted to conducting final assessments. The results of those assessments follow.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the effects of the intervention, the researcher used student questionnaires (Appendices B and C), teacher observation checklists (Appendix D), and kept a record of behaviors leading up to discipline referrals (Appendix A) after the intervention. The results are presented in the following tables and will be addressed separately.

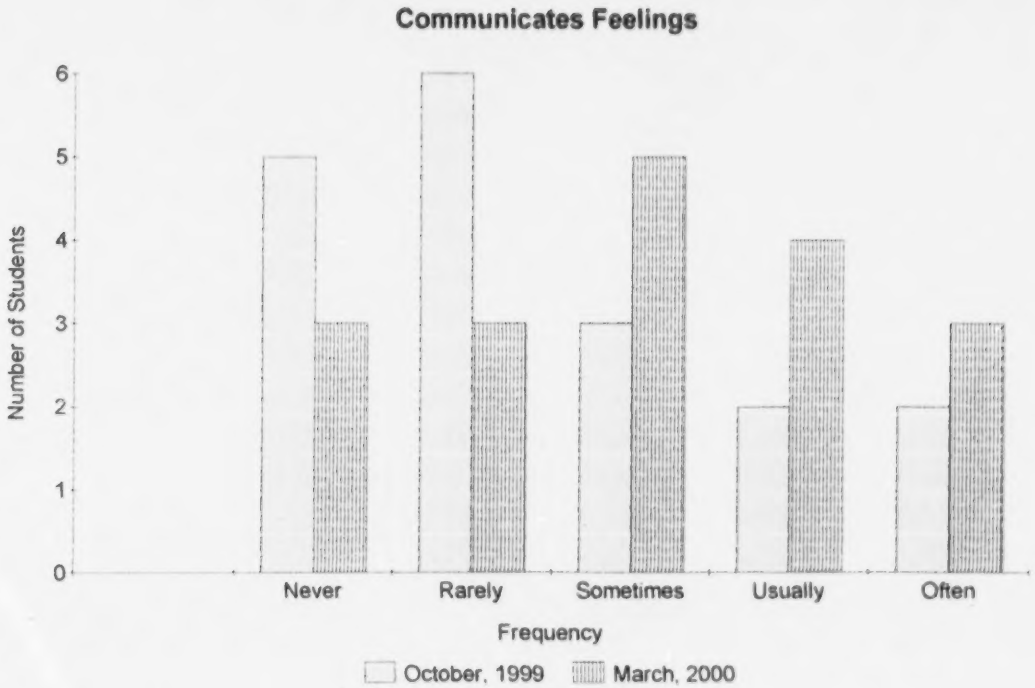
Table 2

Categories and Number of Discipline Referrals March 1, 2000 Through March 30, 2000

Behavior Category	Number of Incidents October, 1999	Number of Incidents March, 2000	Number of Students October, 1999	Number of Students March, 2000
Insubordinatio	10	4	4	2
Arguing	9	6	6	4
Teasing	13	11	6	4
Disrespectful	4	2	4	1

As compared to the data collected before the intervention, these results clearly show a decrease in both the frequency of inappropriate behaviors and the number of students participating in the inappropriate behaviors. Of particular interest is the 66% decrease in the number of students referred for verbally fighting with classmates. This decrease indicates that the students have gained some applicable skills in conflict resolution.

Furthermore, there is a 15% decrease in the frequency of teasing. This speaks favorably for the activities incorporated to help the students appreciate one another's diversity. Research shows that if children are in an environment in which differences are actively appreciated, they themselves will be more appreciative of diversity. Similarly, the activities apparently helped the children to better understand prejudice and discrimination which empowered them to resist prejudging and discriminating against others.



N = 18

Figure 4 Comparison of the number of times that students communicate their feelings before and after the intervention.

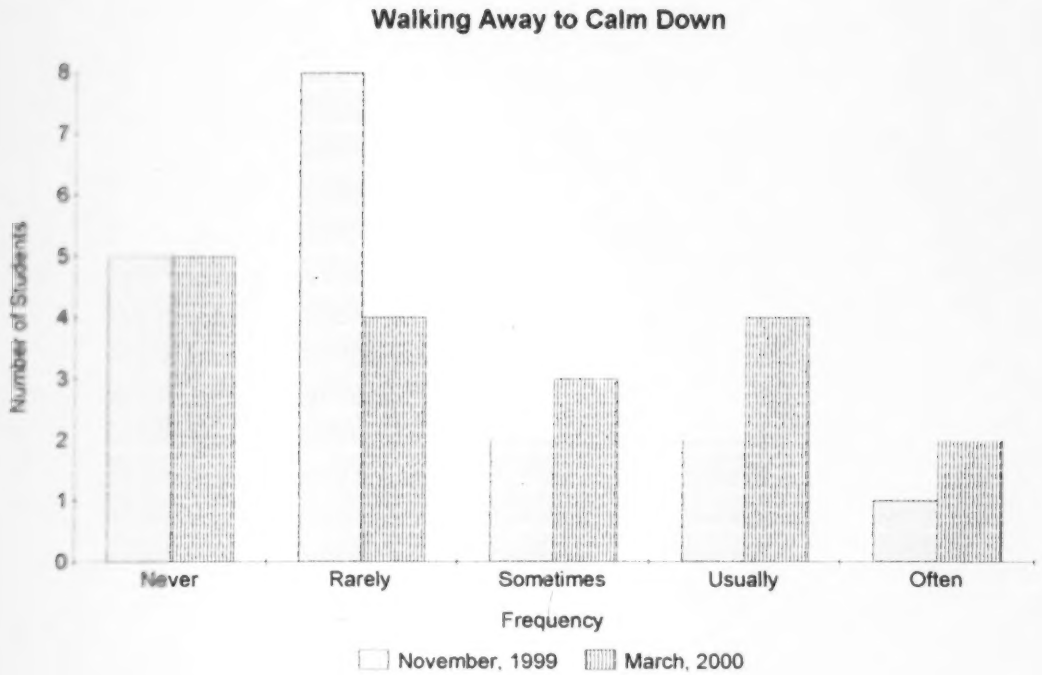
The researcher observed that the percentage of students who usually or often communicate their feelings rather than act them out increased from 22% to 39% after the intervention. Students seemed to have become both more acutely aware of their feelings and became more tactful at communicating to others how they felt. The researcher believes that the listening and speaking activities, along with the role-playing activities which gave the students opportunities to explore different points of view, were significant contributors to the aforementioned results.

N = 18

Figure 6. Comparison of the way students perceive themselves as group partners before and after the intervention.

This table shows an 11% increase in the number of students responding affirmatively when asked whether or not they thought of themselves as good group partners after the intervention. Prior to the intervention, 38% of the students had an unfavorable opinion about their performance while working in groups. After the intervention, only 17% of the students maintained an unfavorable opinion about themselves in group work.

Post intervention data reveal that 72% of the students have a good self-perception. Most of the activities used during the intervention involved group work. The researcher feels that the confidence the students gained during the group activities may have transferred into their overall levels of self-confidence. Moreover, the increased self-confidence seems to have contributed to the improvements shown in the data taken shortly thereafter. That data is displayed on the following figure.



N = 18

Figure 7 Preintervention and Postintervention comparison of the number of times that students claimed to walk away to avoid altercations.

The number of students claiming to never or rarely walk away from a situation to calm down rather than argue dropped from 13 (72% of the class) to 9 (50% of the class) after the intervention. Before the intervention, only 28% of the students claimed that they, at least sometimes, walk away from a situation to avoid arguing; after the intervention, 50% of the students claim that they walk away at least sometimes. The researcher attributes the 22% gain in the number of students who at least sometimes walk away to avoid an argument to the skills the students gained while learning about anger management under the theme, expressing feelings. Students seemed to have come to terms with the fact that "walking away" is not an act of cowardice.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After analyzing the data on discipline referrals, student surveys, and teacher observation checklists, the researcher concluded that the selected activities, administered during the intervention, had a positive impact on the participants overall levels of emotional intelligence and social adeptness. The researcher feels that many of the benefits of the intervention were intangible.

One of the apparent side-effects of the intervention was the increased levels of self-motivation amongst the students. The researcher noticed that the time spent off task, while working both individually and in groups, reduced significantly after the intervention. The undesirable levels of apathy towards work were also curtailed.

The students gained a greater appreciation for the differences that exist among them. Before the intervention, anything that made a person different qualified that individual for teasing and harassment from others. The students' empathetic values definitely benefited, as evidenced by the reduction of teasing.

The alternatives that the students learned during conflict resolution were invaluable. The researcher noticed some of the students incorporating several of the techniques outside of the classroom. A marked difference exists between the way a majority of the students chose to handle problems before the intervention, and the way they handled problems after the intervention. Several students internalized the fact that altercations should be avoided.

Without reservations, the researcher would recommend the use of the curriculum to enhance the students' levels of emotional intelligence and social adeptness. The researcher acknowledges that the some of the desired results are due to natural maturing on the part of the children; but feels that the intervention served as a catalyst for the students' social maturation. The researcher would suggest that others implementing the plan do so during the first few weeks of school. The researcher would also suggest that others incorporate more forms of summative assessment during the intervention.

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Appendix A

Discipline Form

DISCIPLINE RECORD FORM

Name	Insubordination	Arguing	Teasing	Hitting	Disrespectful
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					

Appendix B

Student Questionnaire

Student self-assessment

As honestly as you can, estimate how often you think your friends and teachers observe (see) you displaying each of the following behaviors.

If you think they **never** see you display this behavior put a **0.**

If you think they **rarely** see you display this behavior put a **1.**

If you think they **sometimes** see you display this behavior put a **2.**

If you think they **usually** see you display this behavior put a **3.**

If you think they **oftentimes** see you display this behavior put a **4.**

1. Trying to make new friends with people_____
2. Helping others with things they are struggling with_____
3. Walking away from a situation to calm down rather than arguing____
4. Setting goals for yourself _____
5. Staying focused on your work until your finished ____
6. Admitting your own mistakes _____
7. Trying to solve your own problems before getting help____
8. Being complimented for good manners_____
9. Following the rules of the school and the classroom____
10. Saying kind, encouraging things to people_____
11. Playing with someone of a different race than you_____
12. Helping friends to solve a disagreement_____
13. Making sure you get to your classes on time_____
14. Accepting responsibility for things you've done_____
15. Trying your best even when things go wrong____

Sometimes it takes more than one person's effort to reach a goal. That may take 2 or more people working together cooperatively.

Do you think that you are a good group partner?

Yes, I am a good partner _____

No, I am not a very good partner _____

Appendix D

Teacher Observation Checklist

Teacher Observation Checklist

0 = **never** 1 = **rarely** 2 = **sometimes** 3 = **usually** 4 = **often**

1. Communicates feelings rather than acting them out _____
2. Is sensitive to the feelings of others_____
3. Is aware of rules and shows remorse about breaking them_____
4. Is kind and considerate of others_____
5. Is able to see and try alternative solutions to a problem_____
6. Tries to solve own problems before coming to the teacher for help_____
7. Displays an optimistic attitude towards bad things that happen_____
8. Persists at challenging tasks even when frustrated_____
9. Is liked and considered well-mannered by adults outside the family_____
10. Makes friends easily and enjoys being with them_____
11. Stays focused on tasks at hand_____
12. Able to admit own mistakes_____
13. Sets goals and works towards meeting them_____
14. Does extra work outside of the requirements_____
15. Displays internal locus of control_____

TOOTHPICKS

Children work to create a mutually agreed upon picture or sculpture using toothpicks.

Age:	5–12
Activity Type:	Arts and crafts
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Work tables (or open space)
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	15–20 minutes
Group Size:	4 or more
Prerequisite:	None

MATERIALS

- Toothpicks (at least one box for each group of three or four)

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Have the group brainstorm a list of the ways groups make decisions. Record these on chart paper or a chalkboard. Explain any that are unfamiliar to the group. If the group needs help, prompt them with some of these suggestions: voting, coming to consensus, flipping a coin, asking an expert to decide.
2. The first time you do this activity, divide the children into groups of two. When you repeat it, increase the group size to four. Explain the task to the groups. Each group is going to receive a pile of toothpicks and their task is to make something out of the toothpicks. They can make a picture, a sculpture, whatever they want. They can build up, spread out, or break toothpicks if they wish. There are only two rules. First, the group must use one of the decision-making strategies listed on the chart. (The first time you do this, give the groups the strategy to use, such as voting or everyone coming to agreement.) The second rule is that everyone gets to help make the final product.
3. Distribute the toothpicks and tell children that they may have more if needed. Let the groups begin working. Circulate among them to help with any problems.
4. When the groups finish, have them share their creations.

REFLECTION

- What did you build?
- How did you decide to build it?
- How did each person contribute to the sculpture?
- What problems came up in your group?
- How did you solve them?

TIP!

Toothpicks

Use the "Toothpicks" activity throughout the year with all ages. By repeating it, the children not only get better at decision making, they also make better and more elaborate toothpick creations.

IMPULSE

The group sends an impulse around a linked circle.

Age: 8–12

Activity Type: Team challenge

Activity Level: Moderate

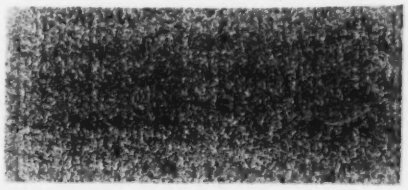
Space: Any

Concentration Level: Medium

Time: 10 minutes

Group Size: 10 or more

Prerequisite: None



MATERIALS

- None

SET THE SCENE

Use this activity as a warm-up that will get the group used to holding hands with each other. This can be one of the first steps to establishing trust in the group.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Have the group form a circle holding hands, including yourself. There should be a comfortable amount of space between each person, so that they are neither squeezed nor stretched.
2. Explain that you are going to create a wave impulse that will circle the group.
3. Start by visibly, but lightly, squeezing the hand of one of your neighbors, moving your hands inward a bit. That person should then pass the impulse to their neighbor and so on until you receive it back again.
4. Experiment with sending the impulse in each direction and then in both directions at the same time. If they are successful, introduce a stopwatch. Establish a time and then try to better it. Try timing it with all eyes closed except the leader's.
5. If the group is not successful, try a variation such as clapping, finger snapping, or sticking out your tongue. Then bring the activity to a close.

REFLECTION

- How successful was the impulse?
- When was the impulse successful?
- When was the impulse not successful?
- What did you learn about working together from this exercise?

TIP!

Gauging Cooperation

It will be clear from this reflection how aware your group is about how they work together. Use it to gauge how well they understand and can practice cooperation.

Activity

FROZEN BEAN BAG

Children move with bean bags on their heads, helping those whose bean bags fall.

Age:	5–7
Activity Type:	Team challenge
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Large open space
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	15 minutes
Group Size:	8 or more
Prerequisite:	None

MATERIALS

- Bean bags (one per child)

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Distribute the bean bags and have children place them on their heads. Give everyone a chance to walk around a little bit, then explain the rules.
2. The goal of the game is to have everyone moving around as long as possible. If a bean bag falls, that child is frozen. The only way to get unfrozen is for someone to pick up the bean bag and put it back on the child's head. But if their bean bag falls while they are helping , they're also frozen until someone helps them.
3. Start the game, reminding the children that the goal is to keep everyone moving as long as possible. Playing the game yourself lets you demonstrate how to help others.
4. It usually only takes a few minutes for everyone to be frozen. Replay the game a few times, trying to improve the group's wandering time.

REFLECTION

- How could we get our bean bags to stay put longer?
- What other ways can/did you help people?
- What other ways can/did people help you?

COOPERATION

Age:	8 –12
Activity Type:	Team challenge
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	20 minutes
Group Size:	8 or more
Prerequisite:	None

Activity

CAN'T WE COUNT TO TEN?

The group tries to count to ten (or twenty).

MATERIALS

- None

SET THE SCENE

Tell the students, "We are going to have a quick CAT test today. What's a CAT?, you ask. Well, a Cooperation Achievement Test."

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Have the group settle down into a comfortable spot. Ask everyone to close their eyes.
2. Tell the group their challenge is to count to ten as a group, but they must obey the following rules. Everyone must keep their eyes shut. No two people may speak at the same time. The group may not speak except to say a number. If two people talk at the same time, the group must start over at one. When you say "go," they may start.
3. Give the group 10 or 15 minutes to try this. As they'll soon see, this is not as easy as it sounds.
4. The occasional group can do this on the first try. If this happens, congratulate the group on a job well done. If your group is like most, however, they may not be able to do it at all. Allow the group to continue trying for another 10 to 15 minutes.

REFLECTION

- What made it hard to cooperate in this activity?
- How did your group cooperate without using your eyes or mouths?

Number Patterns

One way to solve this is by falling into a pattern. For instance, each person could take ownership of a number, moving to the right or left of the person who begins.

COMMUNICATION

Age:	8 -12
Activity Type:	Getting to know you
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	20 minutes
Group Size:	6 or more
Prerequisite:	None

Activity

PETE AND REPEAT*

Children practice active listening skills by paraphrasing what others say.

MATERIALS

- None

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Begin by explaining what paraphrasing is. Give the children some practice by helping them paraphrase some simple sentences, such as:
   - The book I'm reading is exciting.
   - I saw some boring TV shows last night.
   - I'm excited about the field trip we're taking.
2. Have children work in pairs. Designate one child as Pete and the other as Repeat. Explain that whenever Pete says something, he or she will stop for a moment and Repeat will paraphrase it. Pete should nod or say "uh-huh" if it is an accurate paraphrase. Have all the Petes address the topic, "The things grown-ups do that make me mad." After a few minutes, have students switch roles, then continue as above.

REFLECTION

- What was it like to paraphrase the other person's sentences?
- What made it difficult?
- What was it like hearing someone else repeat what you said?
- How would this paraphrasing help when listening to other people?

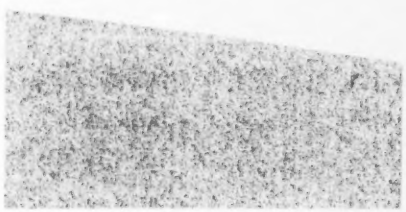
* Adapted with permission from William J. Kreidler, *Creative Conflict Resolution* (Geneva, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984).

Activity

HANDS DOWN

Children try to guess numbers illustrated by the pattern in a set of sticks.

Age:	8–12
Activity Type:	Circle game
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time :	20 minutes
Group Size:	5 or more
Prerequisite:	None



MATERIALS

- Five dowels, sticks, or pencils

SET THE SCENE

Tell the children, "I've got a way of indicating numbers from one to ten, and I'll show you. Guess which number I'm making and I'll tell you if you're right. If you figure out how I'm making the patterns, don't tell. Let everyone try to figure it out for themselves."

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Gather the children together sitting comfortably on the floor in a circle.
2. Place five pencils or sticks on the ground in front of you so that a pattern is formed. Any pattern will do. Ask the group to indicate the number from one to ten that this arrangement demonstrates. Set up two or three different patterns so that the group gets to see and guess additional numbers that you are depicting.
3. The number is not indicated in the sticks at all, but in your hands beside them! Set down whatever pattern of sticks you want, placing your hands, palms down, on the floor next to the sticks with the number of fingers exposed showing the number you have in mind (two fists is zero, two hands with all fingers extended is ten).
4. Someone will eventually figure out what you are doing. Use that person to maintain group interest by asking him or her to name the number in each new pattern. If no one catches on after a few patterns, place your hands closer to the sticks or lay them down more obviously.

Activity

REFLECTION

Briefly explain how you were forming the numbers. Ask the students to describe how they were watching what you did, but also how they were listening to what you said. (You never said the pattern was in the sticks.) Ask the group to share other situations where the answer wasn't obvious, for example, when a friend says one thing, but their body language or tone of voice says another.

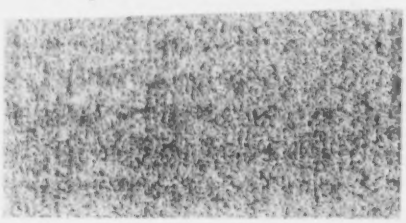
NOTES

Activity

CAN YOU GUESS?

The group tries to communicate using only clapping.

Age:	8–12
Activity Type:	Communication
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	Medium
Time :	15–30 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	None



MATERIALS

- None

SET THE SCENE

Ask the children, "Who here is good at figuring out directions? Can I have two volunteers? The volunteers will leave the room. While they are gone, the rest of us will think of a simple direction for the volunteers to follow when they return. "

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Tell the group the rules. The group will not be able to talk to the volunteers when they return. The group can communicate only by clapping – loud clapping when the volunteers are close to following the direction and no clapping if they are not close at all. Give a standing ovation when they've got it!
2. The directions for the volunteers must be simple. Help to guide the group to an appropriate selection. For example, the volunteer could be directed to come into the room and pick up a piece of paper. Set a time limit for selecting the direction.
3. The volunteers may need some prompting. The best way to figure out the directions is to start doing things around the room. Encourage the volunteers to stay active. If they seem stumped, give a hint.
4. Try several rounds.

REFLECTION

Talk about the different rounds.

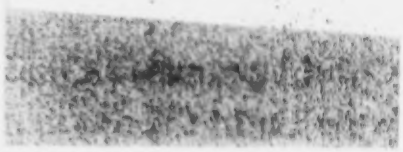
- What made some volunteers more successful at finding the solution than others?

Work with the group to identify those things that made communication easier. Conclude by talking about the relationship between the volunteers and the group. Tell the children that communication cannot rely on one person. It is a relationship between two people or groups.

LISTENING ROLE PLAYS

Children practice listening and speaking skills by role-playing conflict situations.

Age:	8–12
Activity Type:	Drama
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	15–20 minutes
Group Size:	5 or more
Prerequisite:	Listening skills work



MATERIALS

- Role-play Cards

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Ask for volunteers to role play a conflict that involves listening. Give the players the role-play cards and have them present the conflict. They should not show how the conflict is resolved. Stop the role play, discuss the conflict, and ask students to give the characters advice on how to be better listeners. Reflect with the children:

   Mini-Reflection

   - What's the conflict here?
   - How do they feel right now?
   - How are they not being good listeners?
   - How could they be better listeners? What could they do differently?

2. After a short discussion, have the role players continue, using the suggestions to help resolve the conflict. Have the players complete the role play, incorporating the suggestions from the class. The goal is to show how good listening can make a difference when solving problems. Encourage the students to talk from their own perspective. Suggest that they begin their sentences with the word "I."

REFLECTION

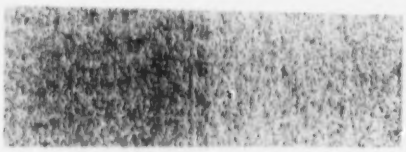
- How did the conflict change once the actors started listening to each other?
- What did they do to be better listeners?
- What difference did it make when the characters started with the word "I"?

Activity

BALLOONING AND DRAINING*

Children are introduced to two simple techniques to help them cool off their anger.

Age:	5–12
Activity Type:	Drama
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	Low
Time:	15 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	"The Anger Thermometer" (p. 150)



MATERIALS

- None

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. "Ballooning" is basically deep breathing. Have the children stand, then tell them to take slow (*not* deep) breaths and fill themselves up with air as if they were balloons. Then, they should slowly let the air out of the "balloons." Repeat a few times and have the children note how they feel.
2. "Draining" is consciously tensing and relaxing the muscles in the body. Again, have the children stand. Ask them to tighten all the muscles in their bodies and hold them tight until you say to let go. After a few seconds, say, "Now relax slowly and let all the anger drain out of you. Imagine a puddle of anger at your feet."

REFLECTION

- How did you feel when you finished ballooning/draining?
- When might you use them?
- How could you balloon or drain in a less obvious way?

* Adapted with permission from William J. Kreidler, *Creative Conflict Resolution* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984).

I TRUST YOU, BUT...

With the help of spotters, children close their eyes and run toward a goal.

Age:	8–12
Activity Type:	Team challenge
Activity Level:	Very active
Space:	Large open space
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	20 minutes
Group Size:	12 or more
Prerequisite:	Previous teambuilding experience together

MATERIALS

- None

SET THE SCENE

Explain to the children, "As in all trust activities, the set-up of this is important. Being a spotter in this activity is a very important, serious job. Joking around or not paying attention is not acceptable." Be sure your group understands this and can commit to the serious nature of this activity before you try it.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Ask for two volunteer runners. The runners will line up at one end of a boundary area. They will be jogging *slowly* across the boundary area with their eyes closed and their hands (palms out) in front of their chests.
2. Line the rest of the group up around the perimeter of the boundary area. For a boundary area the size of a basketball court, it is best to have four people down each side and four people across the end.
3. The role of the spotters is to keep the runners safe. Spotters hold their hands up in front of their chests. If a runner is coming towards them, the spotters meet their hands to the hands of the runner, thus telling the runner to stop.
4. Repeat with as many rounds as necessary to allow whoever wants to go a chance.

The spotters at the end of the boundary area will need to be alert as the runners will be jogging right at them. The spotters should move laterally to line themselves up with a runner. As the runner approaches, the spotter in line with the runner will hold up her hands to the runner's hands and the runner will stop. This is a trust activity and it is important to keep everyone safe. Remind the runners to jog *slowly*.

REFLECTION

Bring the group together in a sitting circle. Ask everyone to close their eyes. Allow one minute for each person to think of one emotion/feeling they had while playing this game. The feeling can be associated with being a spotter or a runner. Once everyone has had time to think, go around the group hearing responses.

- Follow up with questions about why the children had the feelings they had. Encourage the group to think about how

EXPRESSING FEELINGS

Age:	5–10
Activity Type:	Arts and crafts
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Work tables
Concentration Level:	Low
Time:	30 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	None

Activity

MASKING OUR FEELINGS

Children make masks to illustrate a range of feelings.

MATERIALS

- Construction paper
- Markers
- Felt and other scraps of material
- Glue and clear tape
- Yarn, string, or ribbon

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Ask students to think of as many different feelings as they can. Make a list.
2. Have students pick one feeling and create a mask that shows what this feeling looks like using the materials provided. Encourage students within the group to pick a variety of feelings.

REFLECTION

- How did you choose what to put on your mask?
- Did you think of a time when you felt the feeling you chose?
- Did you picture what someone looks like when they feel that way?
- Did you choose certain colors to mean something?
- Do you ever "wear a mask" that *doesn't* show what you are feeling?
- When and why might people do this?

MASKING OUR FEELINGS

Children make masks to illustrate a range of feelings.

Age:	5–10
Activity Type:	Arts and crafts
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Work tables
Concentration Level:	Low
Time:	30 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	None

MATERIALS

- Construction paper
- Markers
- Felt and other scraps of material
- Glue and clear tape
- Yarn, string, or ribbon

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Ask students to think of as many different feelings as they can. Make a list.
2. Have students pick one feeling and create a mask that shows what this feeling looks like using the materials provided. Encourage students within the group to pick a variety of feelings.

REFLECTION

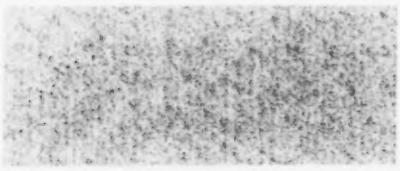
- How did you choose what to put on your mask?
- Did you think of a time when you felt the feeling you chose?
- Did you picture what someone looks like when they feel that way?
- Did you choose certain colors to mean something?
- Do you ever "wear a mask" that *doesn't* show what you are feeling?
- When and why might people do this?

Activity

PICK YOUR CORNER

Children explore differences and similarities in the group by identifying groups to which they belong.

Age:	(5–7) 8–12
Activity Type:	Getting to know you
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Large open space
Concentration Level:	Moderate
Time:	15–20 minutes
Group Size:	10 or more
Prerequisite:	None



MATERIALS

- None

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Designate two corners of the room or sides of the gym as "belong to this group," and "don't belong to this group." Explain to the children that you will be reading statements to them and you want them to go to the appropriate corner, depending on whether they feel they belong or don't belong to the group mentioned.
2. Have the children stand. *Say*, "If you belong to the group that likes broccoli, move to this corner of the room. If you don't belong to that group, move to that corner of the room." As you speak, indicate the appropriate corners and have the children move.

   Mini-Reflection

   - What are some of the good things about belonging to this group?
   - What are some of the disadvantages to not being part of the broccoli-liking group?
   - What kind of conflict could occur between these two groups?

3. Continue the activity with other groups, such as:
   - girls, not girls;
   - tall, not tall;
   - bike riders, not bike riders;
   - Latino, not Latino;
   - can tie own shoes, can't tie own shoes;
   - brown eyes, not brown eyes;
   - Catholic, not Catholic;

For Younger Children

Younger children enjoy this activity. It helps them become more comfortable talking about differences and commonalities.

- ❖ speak more than one language, don't speak more than one language;
- ❖ etc.

4. The groups you name can be as controversial or non-controversial as you wish, but try to present a mix of choices based on groups formed by choice, interests, personal tastes, ethnic and cultural group, etc.

REFLECTION

- ❖ How did you become a member of this group? Were you born into it?
- ❖ Did you choose to be a member?
- ❖ Did you learn something that made you a member?
- ❖ What could you learn from someone in another group?
- ❖ How could different groups be in conflict?
- ❖ How could they resolve those conflicts?

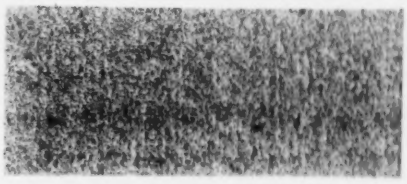
NOTES

Activity

MY VERY OWN TREASURE MAP

Students individually create maps of their lives and then share them with the group.

Age:	11–12
Activity Type:	Arts and crafts
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Work tables
Concentration Level:	Medium
Time:	30 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	None



MATERIALS

- Construction paper
- Crayons, markers
- Pastels, water colors
- Pipe cleaners
- Ribbon, yarn
- Tissue paper
- Glue, tape

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Start by describing the project – creating treasure maps that describe our whole lives, up to this very moment, so that we can learn more about each other. Explain that each child will do his own map individually and that he can use any of the materials you have available. This will be like a treasure map, because the finished product will help someone else learn how you got to the treasure – YOU! Encourage students to include people, events, objects, places, or other things that have been important to them in their maps.
2. Have the children work individually on their maps for about 20 minutes.
3. Share your treasure maps with each other, explaining what you drew.

REFLECTION

- Was it hard to decide what to put in your map? How did you eventually decide? Was there anything you wanted to include but didn't? What was it and why did you leave it out?
- Did you learn anything new about someone in the group?
- Was your map similar to anyone else's in the group? Whose map was the most different from yours? What was different about it?
- What would you like your map to look like in five years? In ten years? In twenty years?

Activity

MULTICULTURAL SHOW AND TELL

Each student brings in something from home which shows her or his cultural background.

Age:	5–12
Activity Type:	Getting to know you
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	45 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	None

MATERIALS

- Five objects that represent American culture: such as a flag, a baseball, a photograph of the White House, a TV remote control, or a pair of blue jeans.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Lay out the five objects and ask students to look at them, thinking about what they all have in common. Hopefully, the children will guess that these are all American objects.
2. Begin by explaining that although many of us are American, we consider our cultural background to be more than just "American." Discuss what the words "cultural background" mean, collecting ideas from the children and creating a list. Ask a few students to share what they know about their individual cultural backgrounds. Be certain that the students understand that cultural background includes things like language, beliefs, traditions, food, music, clothing, and art. Watch for students' feelings about their cultures, and be certain that everyone understands that our cultural background is something about which we should feel proud.
3. Ask the students to pair up and tell their partner what their individual cultural background is. Have students interview one another, asking the following questions:
    - In which countries besides America do your relatives live?
    - In which countries did your relatives who are no longer living live?
    - What holidays do you celebrate at home?
    - What language do you speak at home?
    - Is there a special food that is from your culture that you eat at home? If so, what does it taste like?

4. If you have time and feel it is appropriate for your group, have the interviewers tell the whole group about the cultural background of their partners.
5. As an assignment for a second session, ask students to bring something to the next meeting that will help them tell the group something about their cultural backgrounds.
6. At the second session, have each child show her object and tell the group what it is and what it tells about her cultural background.

REFLECTION

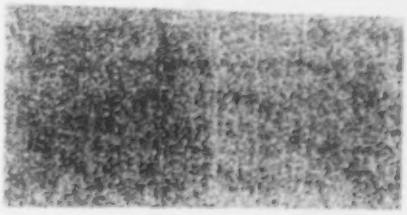
- How many different cultural backgrounds does our group represent?
- Were you surprised by anyone's cultural background? Did you learn something new about anyone in the group? What was it?
- Did you learn anything new about a culture? What was it?

NOTES

WHAT IF SLEEPING BEAUTY WERE A BOY?

Children discuss gender-based stereotypes through variations on traditional fairy tales.

Age:	8–12
Activity Type:	Storytelling
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	30 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	None



MATERIALS

- Any traditional fairy tale (*Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood,* etc.)

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Choose a fairy tale ahead of time that contains very stereotypical gender roles. Rewrite it or make notes for yourself, so that the male characters become female and the female characters are male. Change the names and pronouns accordingly.
2. Read the story aloud to the children. Watch for Teachable Moments – like students laughing at a female wolf or calling male characters who cry "fags" or "wusses."
3. Discuss why the story was different, or funny, or strange.

REFLECTION

- How was this story different from ones we usually hear?
- What surprised you in the story?
- Was there anything that a character did that you thought was strange, considering that she/he was female/male? Why was that strange?
- How can stereotypes about what girls and boys can or cannot do hurt us? Has anyone ever told you that you can't do something because you are a boy/girl?

Activity

WHAT'S CONFLICT?

Children explore the many words that describe conflict and discuss different types of conflict.

Age:	5–12
Activity Type:	Chart
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	20 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	None

MATERIALS

- Chart paper and markers
- Pictures of common objects, such as a TV/VCR, sneakers, watch, etc., mounted on paper

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Write the word "conflict" on the paper and read it aloud. Ask if anyone knows what it means. After a few children have responded, build on their responses by explaining that a conflict is a disagreement between people.
2. Create a web chart. Write the word "conflict" on chart paper. Draw a circle around it. Have the children brainstorm all the words they can think of related to conflict. Record each suggestion on the board, drawing a line from the word to "conflict." Words that are related to previous contributions can be linked to each other. For example:

Activity

Mini-Reflection

- Can anyone give me an example of a conflict?
- What kinds of conflict have you been in?
- What kinds of things do you think of when you hear the word "conflict"?
- What kinds of conflicts do grown-ups have?

3. Show the magazine pictures of common objects and ask children to describe what the object could have to do with conflict. If they cannot think of a way that object could relate to conflict, move on to the next picture.

REFLECTION

- What could this picture have to do with conflict?
- Have you ever had a conflict like that?
- Have you ever seen a conflict related to this object?
- Did the conflict involve behaviors other than physical fighting? What were they?

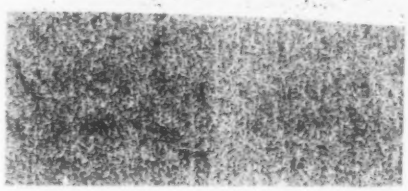
NOTES

Activity

INSTIGATOR

A detective tries to find the instigator in a group.

Age:	5–12
Activity Type:	Team Challenge
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	Medium
Time:	20 minutes
Group Size:	10 or more
Prerequisite:	None



MATERIALS

- Detective hat (optional)

SET THE SCENE

Ask the children, "How does a conflict get started? When someone sets out to start a fight what are they called? Instigator! Today we'll look for instigators."

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Select one child to start as the detective and have them leave the room for a few moments. Once they are gone, pick the first instigator.
2. The instigator will make different movements (e.g., rub their tummy, hop up and down, clap hands, etc.) and the rest of the group will try to follow as accurately as possible. Have them practice a few moves.
3. Ask the detective to return. They now have three guesses to find the instigator while the group makes different movements, following the lead of the instigator.
4. When the detective guesses or uses up their three questions, select a new detective and instigator and continue play.
5. Bring this game to a close by asking the group to start performing actions together. Then, have them take turns randomly as the instigator, changing the movement when they feel like it. Encourage them to enjoy each movement and to share the role of leader.

REFLECTION

- Who is the instigator in a conflict? Was it difficult to spot them in this exercise? Why? What did you look for?
- When you were part of the group, what did you do to keep from giving the instigator away?
- How was the final activity, where you shared the leader role, different from being an instigator?

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Age:	8–10
Activity Type:	Video
Activity Level:	Moderate
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	Medium
Time:	45 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	"Brainstorming" (p. 269)

Activity

MORPHIN' THE POWER RANGERS

Children watch this popular TV show to brainstorm alternative conflict resolution strategies to the Rangers' violent ones.

MATERIALS

- TV and VCR
- Recorded episode of the *Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers* program

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Tape an episode of the TV show and watch it first yourself, thinking about the places where you might stop the tape when watching with the children to address conflict situations.
2. Explain that the group will be watching the *Power Rangers* today, but that they will watch it in an unusual way, as conflict resolution experts, who may be able to help the Power Rangers expand their use of nonviolent conflict resolution strategies. Ask the children to help you decide when to stop the tape during the show. You will be looking for any point in the program when any one of the Power Rangers finds herself or himself in a conflict situation with someone else. At that point the group will think of strategies, *besides fighting*, that the Power Rangers could use to resolve their conflict.
3. Roll the tape!

REFLECTION

- Did the Power Rangers ever use any conflict resolution techniques other than fighting? When?
- Do you think that the Power Rangers fight too much? Why or why not?
- What do you think about TV programs for kids that have a lot of violence in them? Do you think they are fun to watch? Do they ever bother you?
- What lessons do you think kids learn from watching shows like the *Power Rangers* or *Roadrunner*?

Age:	8–12
Activity Type:	Drama
Activity Level:	Quiet
Space:	Any
Concentration Level:	High
Time:	30 minutes
Group Size:	Any
Prerequisite:	"Conflict Escalates" (p. 241), "ABCD Problem Solving" (p. 254)

Activity

PRACTICING MEDIATION

Children are introduced to mediation and practice using it to resolve conflicts.

MATERIALS

- ABCs of Mediation Chart (make a copy on a sheet of chart paper, or enlarge the page on a copy machine) (p. 295)
- ABCs of Mediation Chart copied for each child
- Role-play Cards

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Ask children to describe a time someone helped them solve a conflict. What did the person do? What did they say? What were some of the helpful things they did? Record the key qualities you hear on a chart, such as, "Good listener," "Fair," "Didn't let us call names," and so on.
2. Write the term "mediator" on the board or on paper. Explain that a mediator is someone who helps other people solve their conflicts. The mediator does this not by telling them what to do, but by helping the people talk to each other and focus on solving the problem.
3. Distribute a copy of the ABCs of Mediation Chart to each child. Discuss the steps and how they think those steps will be helpful in solving conflicts.
4. Using the role-play cards that follow, have the children practice using the ABC process to mediate a conflict. After the role play is complete, reflect with the children.

REFLECTION

- Were you able to solve your problem with the help of a mediator?
- What was easy or hard about being a mediator?
- What conflict resolution skills did you use as a mediator?
- What skills do you think you need to be a good mediator?

Activity

The ABCs of Mediation

Introduce yourself. Ask if they want help solving the problem.

Review the ground rules:

- One person talks at a time.
- No name calling or put downs.
- Be honest.
- Ask them:Are you willing to work and try to solve the problem?
  Do you agree to follow these ground rules?

Ask questions

- Decide who will speak first.
- Ask each person: What happened? How did it make you feel?
- After each person talks, summarize what was said.
- Say what you think the problem is.

Brainstorm possible solutions

- Get ideas from each person about how to solve each part of the problem.
- Don't let them criticize the ideas right now. That happens next.
- If there are a lot of ideas, write them down.

Choose solutions

- Good solutions make everyone feel like a winner.
- Be specific. The solution should say Who, What, When, Where, How, How Much.
- Check to see if the solution is realistic and fair.
- Write it down and read it back to them.

Conflict Resolution Chart

Talk It Out

Listen to Each Other

Share

Take Turns

Compromise

Make a Peace Offering

Say "Sorry"

Build Trust

Work Together

Solve the Problem

Put It Off

Skip It

Get Help